

A

# REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

---

Tuesday, December 2. 1707.

---

I Had it in my Design to address this Paper to the Parliament of Great Britain, humbly to move them in Behalf of the great Transaction of Britain, which they will have frequent Occasion to bring upon the Stage in their House, I mean the Union : I purposed to acquaint them with various Attempts, that would be made to bring, if possible, that Affair into some Confusion, and to cause the Stipulations of this nice Treaty, if possible, to clash with Constitution-Right, that the Parliament might, if possible, be drawn in, to call in question, debate, amend, or alter some thing or other belonging to that Treaty.

But I am happy anticipated, and am therefore only to take Notice, that Her Majesty's Speech and the Address of the Commons have fully answer'd my proposed

End, and compleatly made all good People easie in that very material Point ; Her Majesty very kindly caution'd them against it, they very dutifuly resolve against it ; Her Majesty says, DO NOT, they say, Madam, assure your self, WE WILL NOT.

I am therefore very happily anticipated, I say in my Design, and it remains only for me to note here ; poor mortify'd Gentlemen, how are they disappointed ; the Jacobites and High Flyers, I mean, how are they crest-fallen at this Daffter ; how confounded at the Report of this Address, struck as with this Lightning, their Souls are melted in their Bodies, like the Sword in the Scabbard, and they have nothing left to affit them in their Dejections ! — Will the Parliament do nothing to prejudice the Union ? What then is become of all your towring

towing Expectations, and rising Hopes, that the Union should be invaded by the clashing of Interests, and by the Niceties and Difficulties, that would come before them upon the Affairs of Trade ; these Chimera's, which rais'd by the Fumes of the Wine and Brandy, kept both Nations in Suspence a long time.

The Hopes of these Gentlemen are most effectually dash'd, and the Clamours they rais'd at their Brethren grew weaker and weaker every Day, and really they may set their Hearts at Rest concerning this Matter, for the Parliament of Britain having declar'd, they will do nothing in Prejudice of the Treaty ; if they, I say, *will not*, all the rest of the World cannot hurt it : I do not say the Parliament can legally hurt it, and I may be allow'd to say, what they *cannot legally do*, they *cannot do* ; therefore I have all along said they cannot hurt it ; constructive Actions, and debating the dubious Meaning of Articles, may and might have given Umbrage to our Friends, and have encouraged Enemies, but the Parliament is its Defence, and there we may all venture to leave it.

And what is there in the Custom-House Debates about Duties, Equalities, *Ante* and *Post* Entries, &c. worth bringing a thing of such Consequence into Debate ? Oh drink, ye Drunkards, and if ever you would make your Vice useful to the Common-wealth, do it now ; drink out all this *Scots* Wine and Brandy, that the Quantity being gone, the World may have no more Trouble about it, that we may no more scramble and wrangle for Shares and Interest, no more swear and for-swear to Properties, and trump up Owners to day of one Nation, to morrow of another, to sell themselves and their Souls to determine it.

These were some of the Occasions, the Enemies of the Union hoped and promised themselves to bring us all into Confusion about, and where are all their Hopes now become, since the House has now come to a positive Declaration, that they will do nothing in Prejudice of the Union, and this is the main thing they wanted ; for if there be never so many Disputes among us, if they do not amount to a Breach of the Ar-

ticles of Union, they do no way answer the End of this Party.

It is something against the Articles, that they seek for ; something absolutely inconsistent or contrary to them ; something that they might, like the Devil who first tempts, and then accuses, boast of, was a plain Breach, an Infraction of the Treaty. This is the *Halting they watch for*, this is the main thing they drive at — I congratulate Britain in their Disappointment, for when they mourn, the Nation laughs, as the Text says in another Case, *when the Wicked perish, the righteous rejoice*. Nothing could have been so fatal to them, as such a Vote ; it dashes all their Hopes, and defeats all their Expectation, 'tis as bad as another *Ramellies* to their Cause.

See the mighty Effects of a peaceable, calm, sedate Temper in the Nation ; a Temper of Peace, Right, Justice, and Honour must of Necessity preserve the Union, the Treaty can never suffer Shipwreck, while this Principle has Possession of us ; 'tis a divine Preparation which is wrought in the Minds of every Nation and People, whom Providence resolves to make mighty ; every thing that tends to Breaches and Contention, is of the Devil, and tends to mere Confusion, the Emblem, and in part the Essence of that horrid Place ; it weakens, intimidates, and dispirits a Nation, and in the End ruins them.

I wish, you could but have seen in England, what a Baulk this Article in the Address of the House of Commons was to some of those good People, that long'd for Britains Confusions, that depended upon the Attacks to be made upon the Treaty in this Parliament, in order to open a Door to their abdicated Cause, and to the Restoration of their Ecclesiastick, as well as Temporal Tyranny : How blank they look't . How they are hanging Heads, and in some of them hanging Looks betray'd the Anguish of their Minds ! Could you but hear how they curse the Parliament, and call the House of Commons a Parcel of Time serving, flattering, fawning, and I know not how many unmannerly Epithets ; and why, but because they see in this our Day, the things that belong to our Peace ?

And

And do they thus regret this one Vote ? I make this short Inference from it, Gentlemen, which I hope may be for your Edification ; from hence you may judge, of how great Moment this Unanimity of the House is to the Nation ; and tho' I may live to shew you more of this, when I come to speak of *Scotland* in particular, yet take it but now in general ; if this one Vote has confounded a whole Party, broke all their Measures, and jumbled to pieces all their new Schemes drawn for our undoing— Of what Concern then is it to *Britain*, that this Union is made, that this mighty Affair was brought to pass, and of what great Moment is it to preserve it entire in all its Parts ? Do our Enemies build their Hopes upon the Invasion of Parts, and upon bringing Mr. *Hodges's* interfering Interests upon the Stage ; the Consequence, which it appears of to them to have it so, proves the Consequence it is of to us to avoid it, and very well might her Majesty give the House Notice of the Danger by a Caution against it, since so much of our Felicity in both Nations depends upon it !

Let the *Jacobites* then hang their Cause . . . . . in Mourning ; for they never had a more justifiable Reason in the World for their Despair, and were they not past Advice, one wou'd take up this very Argument to move them to give it over— Good Gamesters, they say, always throw up a lost Game ; 'tis counted Desperation for Men surrounded to refuse Quarter, and they lose their Lives to no purpose, when a Garrison refuses to capitulate, tho' there is no hopes of Relief, and no possibility of Defence ; 'tis reckon'd neither a Se vice to their Prince, nor a Point of Honour to their Enemy, and the Assailant is justif'd if he

gives them no Quarter ; they ought to be Treated like Mad-men and Furies, not like Soldiers and Men of Honour —— Really, Gentlemen *Jacobites* in *Britain*, you ought to capitulate now, for if the Parliament of *Britain* go on thus, your Cause is gone ; it is impossible to be defended, and I do not see where you can have Relief—Abroad, I fancy, you have done looking for it ; *Monheur of France* has his Hands too full to relieve you ; if ever he would have assisted you, it would have been in the time of the Treaty, when with a little help you might have done some Mischief ; but that time is over, that occasion is lost ; at Home was all your Hope, and in the Disorders of this Session were your Prospects of a new turn—Now that is all vanish'd, to what Purpose should you hold out any longer, you will certainly be taken by Stern, and then what the Mercy of your Country may afford you, I know not ; but this I know, you will deserve no Quarter ; your obstinacy, under all the National Leuity you have abus'd, ought to make you expect no favour, but that the Parliament should go to work with you, *Vitis & Modis*, different from what has yet been taken with you, and treat you as Midmen and common Enemies to your Country.

But who am I talking to, like blind *Bede*, I am preaching to a heap of Stones, to a Generation whose Hearts in their Inveteracy against their Country, is like the nether Millstone, and cannot be moved ; I shall say no more to them, their own Experience will be their Instructor, tho' late, one time or other they will come to a better Understanding, and I leave them to the Tortures of a *very late*, I will not say, *a too late* Repentance.

## MISCELLANEA.

**L**ONG before the Parliament's Vote to make an Enquiry into the State of our Plantations and our Trade there, it has frequently occur'd to my Thoughts to touch that sore place one time or other, and perhaps I could do it never more sea-

sonably than now ; I shall not meddle with Mismanagement, nor point out Persons, for I design no *Sayya here* ; but certainly the Damage we feel there, is losing Blood so near the Heart, that it occasions such fainting Fits in our Trade, as sometimes put

put the whole Exchange, which is the Heart of Trade into Convulsions.

There was a Man in this Northern World once, who undertook to prove, *England* got nothing by her Plantations; but he forgot himself extreamly, and never thought, that the Employ of our Poor, which the Consumption of our Manufactures supports, and the Increase of Shipping and Seamen, and all the Dependents upon Navigation, by which Innumerable Families are fed and maintain'd, is to be thrown in to the Credit-side of the Account; as to the Plantation Trade, so far as the Export to those Colonies extends, which is in it self really very considerable; and so they are a most advantagious Article in our General of Trade.

Two things I therefore lay down as Maxims in the consideration of our Plantations; *First*, I say, we ought to make their Safety and their Prosperity our own, for that they are a part of our selves, and their Wealth is really our Wealth; we are Great in their Greatness, and Rich in their Increase, both as we are the Center of their Wealth, and as they are the Supply of ours; and those who talk of the Plantations Exhausting us of our People, &c. know not, or do not consider what they say, since sending our People to the Colonies is no more, nor ought to be esteem'd otherwise, than sending People out of Middlesex into Yorkshire, where they are still in the same Government, employ'd to the Benefit of the same Publick Stock, and in the Strength and Defence of the same United Body.

*Secondly*, I say, and by the same Rule, the Plantations can never thrive, but by the Laws, Management, and Direction made and regulated at Home in Britain; 'tis from hence they receive Governors and Strength, are supplied with Ships to guard their Countries, and Convoys to secure their Trade, and if this be ill directed, the Plantations must decay, and must decline.

I know, it has always been a Court Maxim in *England*, while the Courts were afraid of the Peoples Greatness, to keep the Colonies under, and the Notions of their setting up for an Independency have been harr'd to amuse the World, and justifie the Maxim, I speak of. But these Principles with respect to the Colonies, have never

been broach'd nor maintain'd, but by a Party, whose Aim was Oppression, and Method Tyranny, who began with it at Home, and made this the pretence of it Abroad.

This was the mighty frightful *Cbimera*, that prevented *England* encouraging the Proposal of a Copper Mine in *New England*, and I had many Years ago the Pleasure to see, and laugh at the Folly of it. A famous States-man, making a long Oration full of nothing, at the Council-board in King Charles's Time, to show the Danger of making *New England* strong enough to bid us Defiance, and set up for it self a Whymsie so ridiculous, that 'tis in meer Compassion to the Reputation of that Noble Lord, that I do not name him:

I believe, I may say it without wronging my Judgment, or reproaching any one wrongfully; this Court whymsie, has for 20 Years before the Revolution been the Bane of our Colonies Prosperity; *New England* had by this time been our Store-houſe for Naval Provisions, and a Nursery of Seamen, and perhaps been of twice the Magnitude it is now of; but for this fatal and most preposterous Jealousie, of which I believe I may do them Justice, if I say of them, as some have said of the Clergy of the Church of Rome, *they do not believe themselves*.

In order then to carry away before me all the fancied ground for that Suggestion, I lay it down as a Maxim, and will undertake to make it out to a general Satisfaction, that to encourage, increase, and improve our Plantations by all possible Means, is the most, if not the only effectual Method in the World to secure us against their setting up for an Independency of Government.

Instead of which, the sending Scoundrels in Commission to Govern, or rather poll and oppres them, thereby checking their Industry and Improvement, discouraging their Commerce, and being rather set as Spies upon them, than just and moderate Governors, has been the general Practice of those times, to the manifest Ruin of the English Interest in America; Decrease of Planting, which is the Life, and diminishing the Inhabitants, which is the Strength of their Settlements— But of this hereafter